

Prayer

A close-up photograph of a person's hands clasped together in a prayer position. The hands are positioned in the lower center of the frame, with fingers interlaced. A strong, diagonal beam of light from the upper left corner illuminates the hands, creating a dramatic contrast with the deep shadows of the surrounding environment. The person is wearing a dark, textured garment, possibly a robe or sweater. The background is dark and out of focus, emphasizing the hands and the light.

6. Fasting and Prayer

Matthew 17:21 "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

Meaning: Jesus is speaking in our text in answer to why the disciples could not cast a devil out of a boy. Jesus said that kind of miracle can only happen if a believing individual will fast and pray. Fasting is the act of abstaining from food for the purpose of getting an answer from God. Isaiah 58 gives the best description and purpose of fasting.

Application: Our fasting should appear to God not to men. The Bible promises that "... thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6:18). Fasting causes us to die to self and shows God that we are serious about our request. Examples of those who fasted and received answers from God are Moses, Daniel, Jonah, Elijah, and Jesus. Fasting is not just for leaders, but for every Christian. Jesus said, "but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast" (Matthew 9:15). We are living in that day now.

Other Verses for Study: Psalm 35:13; Isaiah 58:1-14;
Daniel 9:3; Joel 2:12; Matthew 6:16-18; Mark 9:29

1. What is fasting? _____
2. What passage gives the best description of fasting?

3. Who should fast? _____

"Through fasting we deprive ourselves so that we might share with others and do so to the glory of God."